Claims

[c1]   A method for operating a seamless affiliated link system comprising:

defining a set of key uniform resource locators (URLs) to be rewritten by a host server as a processing script;

defining said set of key URLs to correspond to a set of key page documents as a function of said processing script;

defining a set of encoded URLs as affiliated URLs;

defining a set of referring servers as affiliated servers;

defining a set of identifier files to correspond to said affiliated URLs;

defining said set of identifier files to identify client browsers requesting said affiliated URLs as affiliated clients;

defining said processing script to process requests for said key URLs, said encoded URLs, and said affiliated clients; and

checking an identifier file for a pre-defined affiliated status.

[c2]   The method of claim 1, wherein checking said identifier for said pre-defined affiliated status further comprises at

least one of: checking an identifier of an encoded URL for pre-defined affiliated URL status, checking an identifier of a referring server for pre-defined affiliated server status, or checking an identifier file of a requesting client browser for affiliated client status.

[c3]   The method of claim 1 further comprising: reading one of said set of key page documents in response to a non-affiliated server or, if affiliated server status cannot be determined, in response to a non-affiliated client.

[c4]   The method of claim 3 further comprising: processing said requested key page document and writing the output to a client browser.

[c5]   The method of claim 1 further comprising: sending an identifier file to a requesting client browser (currently "setting a cookie") in response to said affiliated URLs to identify said requesting client as an affiliated client.

[c6]   The method of claim 5 further comprising: redirecting said affiliated clients to increase link traffic for said specified key page document.

[c7]   The method of claim 1 further comprising: performing affiliated processing in response to said af-

filiated server or said affiliated client as a function of said processing script.

[c8] The method of claim 7 further comprising:
specifying affiliated output for said affiliated server or said affiliated client, wherein said processing script generates a custom output for a host server to provide to a client browser.

[c9] The method of claim 1 further comprising:
recording said requested key page document as a uniform resource locator in a search engine.

[c10] The method of claim 1 further comprising:
processing client Web browser requests using at least one of server input variables, server environment variables, or browser identifier files; and
generating output to a client using at least one of data files, configuration files, or custom program files.

[c11] A method as in claim 1 further comprising:
generating an increased importance value of key uniform resource locators for search engines that determine said importance as a function of links and referrals thereto from said referring server or other Web servers.

[c12] A method as in claim 1 further comprising:
retrieving an identifier through said processing script

from a server input variable;

specifying sending an identifier file to the Web browser or checking for a referring server URL as a function of said identifier;

retrieving a referring server URL through said processing script from a server environment variable defined in an HTTP specification;

specifying, through said referring server URL, at least one of a processing function to perform or a Web page to process;

requesting an identifier file from said Web browser as a function of a lack of said referring server URL;

retrieving said identifier file from said Web browser, and using said identifier file to specify processing to perform; and

serving said Web page in response to a lack of said identifier file.

[c13] A seamless affiliated link system comprising:

a host server rewriting each of a set of URLs as a processing script, said processing script processing a Web browser request by checking a host server input variable, a referring server identifier, and a browser identifier file, thereby determining whether said referring server comprises an affiliated server or a non-affiliated server, or whether said browser comprises an affiliated browser or

a non-affiliated browser, said processing script performing affiliated processing in response to said affiliated server or affiliated browser, said processing script processing said URL in response to said non-affiliated server or non-affiliated browser, and said host server serving said output to said requesting browser.

[c14] The system as in claim 13 further comprising:
a client browser requesting a Web page, which activates said referring server; and
an affiliated client browser requesting a Web page, which activates said host server.

[c15] The system as in claim 14, wherein said referring server comprises said affiliated server referring a request from said client browser to said host server.

[c16] The system as in claim 14, wherein said referring server comprises said non-affiliated server referring a request from said client browser to said host server.

[c17] The system as in claim 14, wherein affiliated output is specified within said host server for said affiliated server or said affiliated client, and wherein output specified by said requested URL is generated for said non-affiliated server or non-affiliated client, and wherein said host server serves said output to a client browser as a func-

tion of said identifiers.

[c18] The system as in claim 13, wherein a search engine spider locates a referring server or said host server.

[c19] The system as in claim 13, wherein said Web browser activates a search engine server that locates either a referring server or said host server.

[c20] The system as in claim 13, wherein said host server and said Web browser operate on a network using HTTP, POP3, or NNTP.

[c21] The system as in claim 13, wherein said host server processes client Web browser requests using at least one of server input variables, server environment variables, and browser identifier files, and said host server generates output to said client using at least one of data files, configuration files, and custom program files.

[c22] A method for operating a seamless affiliated link system comprising:
requesting a URL from at least one of a referring server or host server with a Web browser;
checking identifiers of at least one of said requested URL, said referring server, and said requesting Web browser;
sending an identifier file and redirecting said requesting

Web browser to a specified key page in response to said requested URL identifier;

determining the affiliation of said referring server or said requesting Web browser in response to said identifiers;

linking said referring server or said requesting browser to a host server comprising a plurality of Web pages;

serving at least one of said plurality of Web pages in response to a non-affiliated server or non-affiliated browser; and

performing affiliated processing in response to at least one of an affiliated server or an affiliated browser.

[c23] A method as in claim 22, wherein checking said referring identifier further comprises checking a domain name or an Internet Protocol address.

[c24] A method as in claim 22 further comprising: specifying said affiliated server or said affiliated browser for affiliated processing and output, wherein said affiliated processing generates a custom output for a host server to provide to a client browser.

[c25] A method as in claim 22 further comprising: retrieving said requested URL identifier through said processing script from a host server input variable, as defined in an HTTP specification;

retrieving said referring server identifier through said

processing script from a host server environment variable, as defined in an HTTP specification; and retrieving said requesting Web browser identifier through said processing script from a browser identifier file, as defined in an HTTP specification.